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Pattern of conferences

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Measures to ensure the necessary resources for the upgrading of conference rooms and interpretation booths

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 52/214 B of 22 December 1997, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to address the matter of the technical and audio quality of some conference rooms and to ensure the necessary resources for the upgrading of conference rooms and interpretation booths.

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1. In paragraph 26 of its resolution 52/214 B of 22 December 1997, the General Assembly expressed concern about the technical and audio quality of some conference rooms and in this regard requested the Secretary-General to present proposals in order to ensure all necessary resources for the upgrading of those conference rooms, including interpretation booths.

2. In accordance with the systematic modernization programme endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/14 E of 16 November 1982, resources for improvements to conference rooms have progressively been included in successive proposed programme budgets. For the biennium 1998-1999, resources amounting to approximately $600,000 have been included in the current programme budget for the refurbishment of conference rooms 6 and 10. Further resources estimated at $1,300,000 for the refurbishment of a further two conference rooms (4 and 5) and all interpretation booths are intended to be proposed for inclusion in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 as a continuation of the ongoing programme for the refurbishment of conference rooms.

3. During the biennium 1996-1997, new simultaneous interpretation and voting equipment was installed in conference room 2 in 1997 and minor upgrades were performed in conference room 5, to meet required standards while further detailed upgrades were postponed. Upgrading for conference rooms 6 and 10 will be completed during the 1998-1999 biennium.

4. As concerns the improvements to the interpretation booths, in all conference rooms, these are considered part of the overall upgrade of each room and would be improved simultaneously with improvements to the conference room itself.

5. As will be noted, certain conference rooms remain to be upgraded. While there is no current provision in the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 for such outstanding work, it is anticipated that refurbishment activity will be completed in due course as further resources become available in future bienniums.